

Meeting Minutes

Alaska Recreational Trails Advisory Committee Meeting

Date: July 21, 2026 (Tuesday)

Time: 2:00 PM – 3:00PM

Location: Via Zoom

Meeting called to order by: Angelica Stabs/Rebecca Garrett/Hazel Cristobal

In Attendance

- ARTAC Members Present: Lisa Agnew (2:14pm), Craig Compeau, Lee Hart, Allie Sargent, Terry Valentine, and Jennifer Yuhas.
- ARTAC Members Absent: Jeffrey Collins
- Agency Staff Present: Angelica Stabs, Hazel Cristobal, Rebecca Garrett (Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF))

Summary

The meeting focused on the Recreational Trails Program (RTP), specifically reviewing and updating committee bylaws, discussing the multi-use trails scoring rubric, and evaluating Snowtrails applications for funding. Key discussions included refining the bylaws for officer vacancies and public comment opportunities, and a significant debate on the multi-use trails scoring rubric, particularly regarding scoring criteria for project readiness, community support, and the numerical value of users. The committee also initiated a discussion on accountability and oversight for Snowtrails funding, prompted by concerns about past project execution.

Key Topics

Bylaws, Multi-Use Trails Scoring Rubric, and Snowtrails FY27 funding.

Technical Issues:

Initial delays due to incorrect display names for panelists, which were resolved by the host.

Agenda Approval:

The agenda was approved following a motion and a second.

Public Comment:

No public comments were received.

Roll Call:

Conducted to confirm committee member attendance and identify remaining incorrectly named participants.

Members Present: Craig Compau, Lee Hart, Allie Sargent, Terry Valentine, Jennifer Yue, Lisa Agnew (joined at 2:14pm).

Members Absent: Lisa Agnew (initially), Jeffrey Collins (excused).
Five members present allowed the meeting to proceed.

Funding Opportunities:

National Park Service Funding: Two new opportunities were announced:

Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP): Supports creation or rehabilitation of outdoor recreation facilities in underserved communities. [ORLP Link](#)

Readiness and Recreation Initiative (RARI): A new Land and Water Conservation Fund program for recreation projects involving land acquisition that promote military readiness, compatible land use, or disaster resilience. [RARI Link](#)

Action: No committee action was requested; information was provided for awareness.

Contact: Members were advised to contact the presenter or the Department of Natural Resources for more information.

Bylaws Review:

Changes Discussed:

Section 1.3 (Special Meetings): Changed "in the chair's absence" to "if a vice chair has been elected, then by the vice chair in the chair's absence," to allow flexibility as no vice chair has been elected.

Section 2.3 (Public Comment): Changed from "an opportunity for public comment at the beginning and end of each meeting" to "one or more opportunities for public comment as determined by the chair and consistent with the applicable law" for greater flexibility.

Grammar Clean-up: Minor grammatical corrections.

Section 6.0 (Officers): Clarified that officers "may include a vice chair."

Section 7.5 (Vacancy): Rewritten to state: "If a vice chair has been elected, the vice chair shall assume the duties of the chair until a successor is elected. If no vice chair exists, the committee shall elect an acting chair at the next meeting."

Section 9.0 (Unexcused Absences): Changed the number of unexcused absences from two to three for removal from the committee.

Discussion on Absences: Debate on whether absence criteria should remain in the bylaws or be handled as policy. Consensus to retain it for accountability.

Bylaws Approval: Motion to approve the bylaws with the discussed changes was made, seconded, and approved without objection.

Multi-Use Trails Scoring Rubric Review

Timeline:

Applications aim to open in August and close by end of October to align with previous RTP solicitations.

Historic Access:

A suggestion was made to add "preserving or reopening historic access" as a scoring criterion, particularly for Alaska's historic trails.

Multi-Use Trails Scoring Rubric Discussion:

Clarification Process: A method was proposed for applicants to submit questions to staff, who would then disseminate answers to the entire committee, ensuring consistency and fairness.

Pre-Scoring Q&A: A strong recommendation for staff to host a webinar early in the application period to explain changes to the scoring rubric, allowing applicants to tailor their submissions.

Single Scoring Round: Committee members expressed a desire to avoid multiple rounds of scoring, preferring that all clarifications and additional information be provided before initial scoring.

Application Completeness (Section 2): Suggested to be a "pass/fail" criterion, rather than a scored item, as incomplete applications should not proceed.

Applicant Capacity and Readiness: Discussion centered on how to score projects where a contractor is hired versus the applicant's direct experience. Clarification that the applicant remains responsible for oversight.

Project Description and Scope: No significant comments.

Project Narrative Completeness: Suggested to remove "completeness" from the title as it overlaps with general application completeness.

Timeline (Section 5):

Weighting: Concerns raised that the 10-point weighting for timeline is too high.

Shovel-Readiness: Discussion about incorporating "shovel-readiness" (projects ready for immediate implementation) into the scoring. Federal guidelines were checked, confirming states can use this as a scoring factor. Proposed to either give it high point value or a bonus.

Maps and Graphics: Emphasized the need for professionally drawn, scaled maps.

Public Benefit (Section 7) and Community Support and Engagement (Section 8):

Number of Users: Proposal to remove "number of users" as a scoring criterion due to potential bias against rural communities and difficulty in accurate estimation. Suggested it could be a data point rather than a scoring factor.

Types of Users: Reaffirmed the importance of considering diverse user types (e.g., disabled, elderly) and broad public access.

Proportionality: Discussion on how to score projects fairly in small communities where the number of users is lower but the impact is significant.

Historical Access: Reiteration to ensure historical access considerations are clearly incorporated.

Community Support Weighting: Suggestion to increase the point value for community support and engagement due to its critical importance.

State Parks Applications: Frustration expressed regarding State Parks applications potentially lacking sufficient community support documentation in previous rounds, suggesting stricter requirements for all applicants.

Quantifying Support: Discussion on how to objectively quantify community support, considering diversity of groups (e.g., multiple agencies, tribes, non-profits, businesses, varying outreach

methods). Avoid strict numerical requirements due to community size differences.

Budget Quality and Accuracy (Section 10) and Budget Reasonableness and Alignment (Section 11): Suggested combining these two sections.

Leveraging Funds: Interest in knowing if applicants are securing other grants for related projects, suggesting a more comprehensive plan.

Funding and Match Compliance (Section 12): Proposed that staff handle this as a pass/fail compliance check during initial application review.

Snowtrails Application Review FY27:

Overview: A list of snow trail applicants and their requested funding was presented. No full applications were reviewed, only summary notes and scores. Reduced budgets for some applicants were noted.

Accountability and Progress Reports:

Terry Valentine's Concern: Raised concerns about project execution quality for some past recipients and requested progress reports for all funded Snowtrails projects.

Rationale: To ensure taxpayer money is well-utilized, projects are executed effectively, and to inform future funding decisions.

Proposed Solutions:

Monthly Reports: Staff (Rebecca) can pull monthly reports including financial data and pictures for snow trail grooming.

Public Survey/Member Surveys: Suggested implementing a public or member survey (e.g., QR codes at trailheads, simple 5-10 question format) to gauge satisfaction and quality of grooming.

GPS Tracking: Proposed requiring GPS tracking for all grooming machines to verify miles groomed, similar to practices in construction or Matsu Borough's existing system.

Objectivity: Difficulty in objectively measuring grooming quality due to weather, use, and volunteer availability.

Implementation: Questions about staff capacity to manage GPS data, and whether it's appropriate to add new stipulations to current funding applications.

Cost: GPS units and internet service costs are currently not funded by the program.

Specific Applicant Discussion:

Eureka Trails: Noted for a significantly larger ask due to increased miles (estimated 120 additional miles). Concerns raised about the cost per mile and potential overlap with other clubs like Lake Louise.

Hatcher Pass: High cost per mile attributed to alpine terrain and extensive brushing work.

Matsu Borough: Confirmed Matsu Borough clubs receive some funding and utilize GPS tracking, with data often publicly available.

Timeline for Snowtrails Awards: Goal to have awards in place by October 1st, optimally finalized before September due to FHWA closing period.

Next Steps for Snowtrails: Staff will clarify Committee's request for information and provide the map for Eureka Trails for committee review before the next meeting to decide on funding. A meeting will be scheduled soon.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn made at 3:48 p.m., seconded, and approved.